

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the cafeteria at Justina Road Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Diane Gillespie, principal, Justina Road Elementary School; John C. Fryer, Jr., superintendent of schools, Duval County Public School District; Joseph K. Torgesen, distinguished research professor of psychology and education, Florida State University; and G. Reid Lyons, chief, Child Development and Behavior Branch, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health.

### **Remarks on the Terrorist Attack on New York City's World Trade Center in Sarasota, Florida**

*September 11, 2001*

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a difficult moment for America. I, unfortunately, will be going back to Washington after my remarks. Secretary Rod Paige and the Lieutenant Governor will take the podium and discuss education. I do want to thank the folks here at Booker Elementary School for their hospitality.

Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country. I have spoken to the Vice President, to the Governor of New York, to the Director of the FBI, and have ordered that the full resources of the Federal Government go to help the victims and their families and to conduct a full-scale investigation to hunt down and to find those folks who committed this act.

Terrorism against our Nation will not stand.

And now if you would join me in a moment of silence. May God bless the victims, their families, and America.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in the Media Center at Emma Booker Elementary School. In his remarks, the President referred to Lt. Gov. Frank T. Brogan of Florida and Gov. George E. Pataki of New York. At 8:45 a.m. American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the World

Trade Center North, and at 9:05 a.m. United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into the World Trade Center South. Both flights were scheduled from Boston Logan International Airport to Los Angeles International Airport.

### **Remarks on the Terrorist Attacks at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana**

*September 11, 2001*

Freedom, itself, was attacked this morning by a faceless coward, and freedom will be defended. I want to reassure the American people that the full resources of the Federal Government are working to assist local authorities to save lives and to help the victims of these attacks. Make no mistake: The United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts.

I've been in regular contact with the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, the national security team, and my Cabinet. We have taken all appropriate security precautions to protect the American people. Our military at home and around the world is on high alert status, and we have taken the necessary security precautions to continue the functions of your Government.

We have been in touch with the leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans.

I ask the American people to join me in saying a thanks for all the folks who have been fighting hard to rescue our fellow citizens and to join me in saying a prayer for the victims and their families.

The resolve of our great Nation is being tested. But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:30 p.m. in the Dougherty Center. At 9:40 a.m., subsequent to the President's remarks in Sarasota, FL, American Airlines Flight 77, scheduled from Dulles International Airport to Los Angeles International Airport, crashed into the Pentagon.

**Proclamation 7461—Honoring the Victims of the Incidents on Tuesday, September 11, 2001**

*September 11, 2001*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

As a mark of respect for those killed by the heinous acts of violence perpetrated by faceless cowards upon the people and the freedom of the United States on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me as President of the United States of America by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and upon all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions until sunset, Sunday, September 16, 2001. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same length of time at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 13, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 14.

**Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks**

*September 11, 2001*

Good evening. Today our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes or in their offices: secretaries, business men

and women, military and Federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our Nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed. Our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today our Nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America, with the daring of our rescueworkers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our Government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, DC, to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our Government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.